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LAW ON ELECTING REPRESENTATIVES
 TO THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY OF BULGARIA

Election System

In accordance with Article 2 of the Bulgarian Constitution, representa-
 tives to the People's Assembly are elected by universal, equal, and direct
 secret ballot.

All citizens over 18 years of age, regardless of race, sex, religious
 faith, education, residence, social origin, or property holdings, except con-
 victs, have the right to elect representatives.

Any Bulgarian citizen over 18 years of age regardless of race, sex, reli-
 gious faith, education, residence, social origin, or property holdings may be
 elected.

Each citizen has one vote.

Women participate in elections and can be elected on the same basis as
 men.

Citizens serving in the armed forces can vote and can be elected on the
 same basis as other citizens.

Elections are held directly by citizens by secret ballot.

Elections for representatives are held in election rayons (districts).

People's representatives who do not justify the faith of those who elected
 them, who radically change the platform on which they were nominated, or who
 violate the basic tenets of discipline of their party or organization, can be
 recalled upon the petition of that party or organization.

- 1 -

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The decision to recall a representative is made by a majority (more than half) of the members of the People's Assembly.

The expenditures connected with conducting the elections are paid by the state.

Election Lists

All citizens, including those who will reach 18 years of age on election day, who have franchise and who live (either permanently or temporarily) in the territory of a given people's soviet at the time its election list is drawn up are entered on the list.

Each voter may be entered on only one election list.

Persons who are convicts or who are disenfranchised because of prison sentences cannot be entered on voting lists during their term of confinement.

Voting lists are composed by the executive committees of the urban and rural people's soviets. In towns divided into rayons, the lists are composed by rayon people's soviets.

Voting lists for military units are drawn up by the commanding officer. All civilian employees of these units are entered on voting lists in their places of residence by their respective people's soviets. If the military unit is not at the garrison headquarters, the lists of [civilian] employees are drawn up at their temporary place of residence.

Election lists for Labor Service units are composed by the respective chiefs. All other [civilian] employees attached to these units are entered on lists at their residences by the executive committees of their people's soviets. If the Labor Service unit is not at its headquarters, the lists of these employees are composed at their temporary place of residence.

The election lists are composed for each voting section in alphabetical order, as established by the Presidium of the People's Assembly. The following information must be given: first name, patronymic, last name, year of birth, address, occupation, place of residence, and signature of the executive committee of the people's soviet.

Thirty days before election day, the executive committees of the people's soviets post the election lists for the public in the building of the people's soviet or in the voting section.

The original of the voting list is kept by the respective executive committees of the people's soviet, the military unit, or the Labor Service unit.

Either written or oral reports concerning errors in the voting list must be submitted to the people's soviet.

If the writer of these reports does not agree with the decision of the people's soviet, he can appeal to the people's court, whose decision is final.

Election Districts

There are one representative and one election district for every 30,000 inhabitants.

Election districts, which are divided into election sections, are designated by the Presidium of the People's Assembly, which examines election lists not later than 2 months before election day.

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Election Sections

Election sections to accept ballots and count votes are formed by executive committees of people's soviets not later than 45 days before election day.

Each populated place of up to 1,000 inhabitants forms one election section. A populated place with over 1,000 inhabitants forms as many election sections as the figure 1,000 can be divided into the number of inhabitants. When the inhabitants have been divided into election sections and there is a remainder of more than 500 inhabitants, a separate election section is formed. If the remainder of the inhabitants is less than 500, they are distributed among the existing sections. At the discretion of executive committees of okoliya, urban, and rayon people's soviets, sections with less than 500 and more than 1,500 inhabitants may be formed.

Military units and Labor-Service units of not less than 50 or more than 1,000 troops form separate election sections within the election districts where the units are stationed.

Hospitals, maternity homes, and sanatoriums having not less than 25 persons form a separate election section.

Steamships afloat on election day which include at least 25 persons may form separate election sections under the election district of the port in which the steamship is registered.

Election Commissions

The central election commission is formed by representatives of BKP (Bulgarian Communist Party) organizations; BZNS (Bulgarian Agricultural People's Union) societies; Fatherland Front organizations; trade unions; cooperative organizations; youth organizations; cultural, technical, and scientific societies; enterprises; military units; TKZS (cooperative labor farms) and private farms; and DZS (state farms).

The central election commission is composed of a chairman, a deputy chairman, a secretary, and 20 members, and is approved by the Presidium of the People's Assembly. The commission sees that the law is carried out; looks into complaints of irregularities and makes decisions on them; sets up the form and color of the ballot and the protocol of the rayon election commissions for registering candidates for people's representatives; establishes the worthiness of an elected people's representative; registers elected people's representatives; and gives election papers to the mandate commission.

District election commissions are composed of a chairman, a deputy chairman, a secretary, and eight members, and are approved by the Presidium of the People's Assembly at least 50 days before elections. Their functions are similar to those of the central election commission, but on a smaller scale.

Section election commissions which are formed in all election sections are composed of a chairman, a deputy chairman, a secretary, and from 4 to 8 members.

The sessions of the central election commission and of the district and section election commissions are legal if half of the membership is present. Decisions are made with a majority. If there is a tie, the chairman's vote is the deciding one.

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Nomination of Candidates

BKP, BZNS, Fatherland Front, trade union, cooperative, youth, and cultural organizations can nominate candidates for people's representatives. These candidates may be elected in only one election district. Members of district or section election commissions may not be candidates in the districts in which they are members of a commission.

Candidates who are fascists or have other antipeople's beliefs cannot be nominated. If a party or a general political organization has nominated a Fatherland Front candidate for people's representative, it cannot nominate other candidates.

Party and Fatherland Front organizations may not nominate more than one candidate in the same election district.

Organizations nominating candidates must register them at least 30 days before election day with the district election commission. When registering their candidates, they must give a protocol of the meeting at which the candidate was nominated, signed by the members of the bureau with their residences; and including the name of the organization; the place, time, and number of participants in the meeting; the first name, patronymic, and last name of the candidate; and his age, address, party affiliation, and occupation. A statement by the candidate that he agrees to his nomination in a given district under the auspices of the nominating organization must also be presented.

Candidates nominated by general organizations are registered by the district election commission.

A refusal by the district election commission to register a candidate may be appealed within 2 days before the Central Election Commission, whose decision is final.

Information consisting of the first name, patronymic, last name, age, occupation, and party affiliation of each registered candidate and the title of the organization nominating him is given to the district election commission not later than 25 days before election day.

Each organization, nominee, and citizen may campaign, but campaigning is not allowed during voting hours.

Order of Voting

Elections for the People's Assembly are held on one day throughout the country; the day, which is a nonworkday, is set by the Presidium of the People's Assembly at least 2 months in advance. The day and the voting place must be widely advertised in the press or other media for the 20 days prior to election day. Voting begins at 0700 hours and lasts until 1800 hours; if there are people still waiting to vote, however, voting will be extended to 1900 hours.

At 0700 hours on election day, the chairman of the section election commission, in the presence of its members, must examine the ballot boxes and the election list; the ballot boxes are then closed and sealed with the local people's soviet seal and the voters are allowed to proceed with voting.

Any voter who cannot fill out the ballot, either because he is illiterate or because he has a physical handicap, may send another voter to fill out his ballot.

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If a voter is not known to the secretary or officer of the section election commission, he must show a personal passport or temporary identity card, work papers, a trade union membership card, or other identification paper before receiving a ballot.

Voters must leave on their ballots only the name of their candidate, striking out the names of the other candidates, and must place the ballot in the ballot box.

On election day at 1800 hours (or 1900 hours), the chairman of the section election commission stops the balloting and the election boxes are opened.

Election Results

A ballot which contains more than one candidate's name is invalid.

The section election commission submits a protocol indicating the time balloting began and ended, the total number of voters according to the election list, the number of voters receiving ballots, the number of voters taking part in the voting, the number of ballots judged invalid, the number of ballots having all the names crossed out, the number of votes given each candidate, and a summary of reports and complaints given to the section election commission and its decisions on them.

After counting the votes and signing the protocol, the chairman of the section election commission announces the results. A copy of the protocol must be dispatched immediately by courier to the district election commission.

All ballots (with valid and invalid ballots separated), together with the copies of the voting protocol and other election papers, must be submitted by the chairman of the section election commission, for safekeeping, as follows: in cities, to the executive committees of urban people's soviets (in cities with rayons, to the executive committees of rayon people's soviets); and in villages, to executive committees of okoliya people's soviets.

The district election commissions count the votes and establish the election results for the district on the basis of the protocols presented by the section election commissions. The district election commission composes a protocol in two copies containing the following information: the number of section election commissions in the district, the number of section election commissions presenting protocols, the total number of voters in the district, the number of voters receiving ballots, the number of voters taking part in the voting, the number of ballots judged invalid, the number of ballots in which all names were crossed out, the number of votes given each candidate, and a short summary of reports and complaints to the district election commission and its decisions on them.

A candidate for people's representative who receives more than half of all the valid votes in the district is proclaimed elected, and the chairman of the district election commission issues to the elected candidate a certificate stating that he has been elected a people's representative.

After signing the protocol, the chairman of the district election commission must immediately send one copy, with the seal, by courier to the central election commission. The second copy of the protocol, the protocols of the section election commissions, and the election papers of the district election commission are given by the chairman of the district election commission to the executive committee of the respective okrug people's soviet for safekeeping.

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If no one candidate receives the necessary majority of votes, the district election commission notes this in the protocol, reports to the central election commission, and within 2 weeks announces a date for a second election in the election district.

If the number of voters in the district is less than half of the number of eligible voters, the district election commission notes this in the protocol and reports it to the central election commission. In such a case, the central election commission sets a date for a new election not later than 2 weeks after the first election.

The second election is conducted according to the election lists established for the first election.

In case a people's representative to the People's Assembly withdraws, the Presidium of the People's Assembly sets the date for electing a new people's representative in that election district 2 weeks after his withdrawal.

Violating Voting Rights

For violating voting rights, the violators are punished according to Article No 100-102 of the Criminal Code.

This law replaces the Law on Electing People's Representatives published in Durzhaven Vestnik, No 175, 1 August 1949. Fulfillment of this ukase is the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice.

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